

# Peer Coaching Process: Using the GROW Model Approach



## Purpose

This job aid is for participants in the course Introduction to Peer Coaching (TRN401) and uses the GROW model to provide a structure for the flow of a peer coaching conversation with a focus on developing listening and questioning skills.

Familiarity with the GROW model is assumed. More information on using the GROW model can be found here: [Using the GROW Model in a Coaching Approach](#)



## What is Peer Coaching?

Peer coaching is a confidential process of collaborative inquiry through which a small group of colleagues meets regularly to help each other learn together, address real challenges and issues, explore possibilities and take action to achieve desired results.

Peer coaching supports leadership development by connecting colleagues at a similar level and using the coaching process to explore issues, generate insights, and address challenges that may apply to and provide learning for the entire group.



## Peer Coaching Groups


Peer coaching groups may experience transformational learning as they build new relationships and share ideas that lead to mutual learning and personal development while experiencing the benefits related to sustainable change.

Members of peer coaching groups build trust in the process and each other and can generate powerful breakthroughs in addressing challenges at any level in an organization.



Ideally, members of peer coaching groups are not from the same team or department, for reasons of confidentiality and psychological safety, although it may still work if there are clear agreements in place.

The typical size of a peer coaching group is four to six people, with no more than eight recommended.

 <b>Peer Coaching Process</b>	<b>Time*</b>
1. Coach Facilitator - Welcome and frame conversation	<b>5 minutes</b>
2. Coachee – Present topic and challenge	<b>5 minutes</b>
3. Peer Coaches - Explore goal (GROW model – Goal)	<b>10 minutes</b>
4. Peer Coaches - Explore current reality (GROW model – Reality)	<b>20 minutes</b>
5. Peer Coaches - Explore possibilities (GROW model – Options)	<b>5 minutes</b>
6. Peer Coaches - Commitment and action (GROW model – Will)	<b>5 minutes</b>
7. All - Reflection and journaling	<b>5 minutes</b>
8. Coach facilitator – Complete Session	<b>5 minutes</b>

\* The suggested timing for each portion of the process is provided as a guide to help peer coaching groups keep on track as they become comfortable with the process.

## GROW Model Coaching Approach





1

## Coach Facilitator - Welcome and frame conversation

The coach facilitator plays a key role in leading the peer coaching group in all phases of the process. The role of the coach facilitator can alternate among group members to encourage learning by doing.

At the beginning of the session, the coach facilitator welcomes all participants, reviews ground rules, and creates the conditions to encourage discussion by explaining the process and the use of powerful questions. They also remind everyone to use the GROW model to structure the conversation.

The coach facilitator manages time and processes, and in collaboration with the group, schedules coaching sessions four to six weeks apart and communicates with members between sessions as required. The coach facilitator may also pose questions to the coachee and may ask clarifying questions to confirm coaching focus during sessions.

### **Ground rules for peer coaching groups may include, but not be limited to:**

- Adhering to the peer coaching process using the GROW model to structure conversations
- Scheduling meetings when all group members are available
- Respecting the confidential and non-judgmental nature of conversations
- Being prepared as a coachee and as peer coaches to support each other
- Committing to actively participate
- Sharing time fairly among all group members
- Behaving in certain ways e.g., holding one conversation at a time, being on time for meetings, and not interrupting when someone is speaking

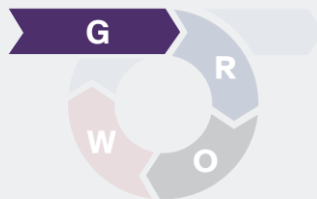
## 2

**Coachee - Present topic and challenge**

The coachee's role is to come prepared to share a challenge or issue and what they would like from the coaching. The coachee is encouraged to be open to exploring with peer coaching group members what is at stake, different perspectives on the issue, and potential solutions. This phase brings focus to the challenge and supports the coachee in finding their desired future state by briefly and precisely making a request of the peer coaching group e.g., "I need help with..."

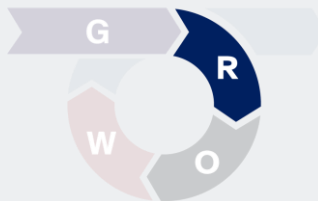
- Present a brief statement on the challenge. This should be something that the coachee cares about, that is within their sphere of influence, and on which they are willing to explore possibilities for action.
- Supply relevant background information such as what the coachee wants to do. What would the result look like if the coachee were successful?
- Who are the people involved?
- How has the coachee tried to address the issue so far?
- Share one or two specific areas of focus or questions the coachee would like peer coaches to address with them during a coaching conversation.

## 3

**Peer Coaches - Explore goal (GROW model – Goal)**

Peer coaches will take turns asking the coachee questions to gain a better understanding of their desired goal by listening globally and asking powerful questions. Remember to leave your problem-solving muscles outside the peer coaching conversation.

## 4 Peer Coaches - Explore current reality (GROW model – Reality)



The role of coaches is to be of service to the coachee through active listening and questioning. Peer coaches convey empathy and support, but also challenge the coachee to see their blind spots.

In this phase, peer group coaches take turns asking questions to explore the coachee's inner and outer realities, naming the barriers that exist between their current situation and desired future state. This step raises the coachee's awareness of their values, limiting beliefs, and their feelings and energy levels concerning their challenge.

While holding the belief that each coachee is an expert on their life, coaches ask powerful, open-ended questions that support the coachee in seeing and reflecting, from a new vantage point, their habitual ways of doing and being. This helps the coachee think more deeply about the issues underlying their challenge.

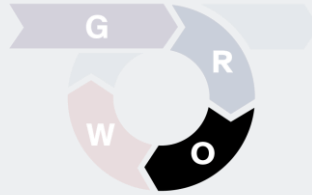
**Internal reflections:** Questions focused on assumptions, judgments, values, and feelings.

**Individual action:** Questions focused on what can be done that has not been tried.

**Relationships:** Questions that involve others.

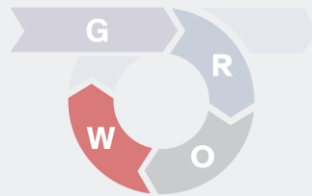
**Environment:** Questions focused on plans, structures, and systems.

## 5 Peer Coaches - Explore possibilities (GROW model – Options)



This phase in the process explores new perspectives and finds workable options that can help the coachee move closer to meeting their desired future state. Inspiration and a sense of possibility characterize this step.

## 6 Peer Coaches - Commitment and action (GROW model – Will)



This phase is about naming what the coachee will do, when they will do it and how they will choose to be accountable. The coachee shares their action and engagement plan with peer coaches.

Attention is paid to how challenging and resonant the action is for the coachee, and how committed they are to taking it. Is the action SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound)?



## 7

### All - Reflection and journaling



This is personal reflection time for all participants to make note of any key points and takeaways from the peer coaching conversation.

- What have I achieved because I participated in this peer coaching conversation?
- What insights have I gained about myself in my role in this peer coaching group conversation? What insights have I gained about my colleagues? What insights have I gained about learning this way?
- What action(s) will I commit to as a next step to gain maximum advantage from this process?
- What is the sense of the effectiveness of our learning as a group?
- Are we comfortable with all aspects of the process we are using?
- Is our process doing what it is designed to do?
- Are we able to measure relevance and results?

## 8

### Coach Facilitator – Complete session

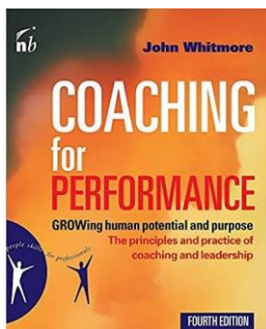
Recap key takeaways, thank everyone for their engagement and participation, and remind all participants of the peer coaching session date and your availability to communicate between peer group conversations if needed.



## Additional Reference Tools

Canada School of Public Service Job Aids:

- Using the GROW model in a Coaching Approach
- Coaching for Resilience
- Coaching for Influence
- Coaching for Empowerment
- Coaching for Engagement



*Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose: The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership, Sir John Whitmore* The GROW model was developed by Sir John Whitmore and first discussed in his book. The book also explains how to unlock people's potential to maximize their performance and use coaching to transform learning and workplace relationships.

*Change Your Questions, Change Your Life, Marilee Adams.* This book offers 12 powerful tools for leadership, coaching and life and shares her insight on the art of asking powerful questions.

